

1 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

2 STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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5 CSREES LISTENING SESSION)

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8 Fresno, California, Wednesday, October 3, 2001

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12 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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23 Reported by:
CHERYL L. COON, C.S.R.
24 Certificate No. 10039

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8 Fresno, California, Wednesday, October 3, 2001

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11 The transcript of proceedings regarding the
12 foregoing meeting was taken on October 3, 2001,
13 commencing at the hour of 9:20 a.m. at Picadilly Inn -
14 University, 4961 N. Cedar Avenue, Fresno, California,
15 before Cheryl L. Coon, Certified Shorthand Reporter.

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1 A-P-P-E-A-R-A-N-C-E-S

2 -oOo-

3 For USDA:

4 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
5 BY: JIM SPURLING
6 Cooperative State Research Education,
7 And Extension Service
8 Room 336-A
9 Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building
10 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
11 Washington, DC 0250-2201

12 Also present:

13 Gary Cunningham
14 Will Scott, Jr.
15 Jeffrey Gilmore
16 Carole MacNeil, Ph.D.
17 Phil Schwab
18 Perry Brown
19 Pat Ricchiuti
20 Joaquin Contente

21 -oOo-

22 The following proceedings were had and testimony
23 taken, to wit:

24 -oOo-

25 MR. SPURLING: My name is Jim Spurling. I'm
the assistant administrator for the Cooperative State
Research Education Extension Service. This is the third
of a series of four listening sessions that CSREES is
having. We started in Pennsylvania and we had one in
Minnesota. We'll have this one and we have one coming
up in the New Orleans area later this month on October
25th. Unfortunately, all we're doing is coming out and

1 offering anyone that wants to the opportunity to tell us
2 about our programs and how they're affecting them and if
3 they are doing the job that they're supposed to be
4 doing, and therefore give us advice on how we might be
5 able to change some of those programs or add to them to
6 make it better on those that we're trying to serve. We
7 didn't get much response here. We were hoping since we
8 had kind of planned this meeting, immediately following
9 this meeting, that we could perhaps get some of the
10 colleges and universities that are not a part of the
11 land grant system to let us know their thoughts, but
12 unfortunately that plan didn't work very well. They did
13 have their meeting but they all left. But we did have
14 the opportunity to meet with Dean Bartell from Fresno
15 State yesterday for a couple of hours. We saw their
16 fine facilities and we heard what their suggestions were
17 to improve our programs that could possibly be of help
18 to them. At any rate to get the day started, we do have
19 Perry Brown, who is with the National Association of
20 Professional Forestry Schools and Colleges. So Perry,
21 I'm going to just call on you to go ahead and do your
22 testimony.

23 MR. BROWN: So can I just come up here?

24 MR. SPURLING: Yeah, that would be fine.

25 MR. BROWN: It's kind of funny speaking to a

1 little tiny audience over here and actually the audience
2 is over here.

3 MR. SPURLING: That's not true. The associate
4 administrator for our agency, Gary Cunningham, is here
5 in the audience who just came on board about two weeks
6 ago.

7 MR. BROWN: From New Mexico state, right?

8 MR. SPURLING: Yeah. So you do have our top
9 leaders here.

10 MR. BROWN: Actually, I thought I recognized
11 you, but it's been many, many years.

12 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Can't have been very many
13 years. I'm not that old.

14 MR. BROWN: But I am. Well, you've already
15 introduced me, but I'm Perry Brown. I'm the president
16 of the National Association of Professional Forestry
17 Schools and Colleges. I'm also the Dean of the School
18 of Forestry at the University of Montana and director of
19 the Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station.

20 NAPFSC is an association of 64 colleges focused
21 on research, education and outreach both in the U.S. and
22 private universities, and I'm here just to share with
23 you some thoughts about forests and the importance of
24 forests and the importance of CSREES programs regarding
25 forests and forestry.

1 You're probably aware that forests cover about
2 a third of the U.S., almost 750 million acres.
3 Fifty-eight percent of these lands are privately or
4 tribally held, while the remaining 42 percent are
5 publicly held. Of the private forest lands, about 80
6 percent are held as nonindustrial private forests and
7 over 10 million people own these forests. So if you
8 figure that in terms of families, I would say that there
9 are probably at least 30 million individuals that own
10 these private forests, and there may even be a larger
11 number than that. And that number some of you may know
12 has been growing over the last several years, that as
13 states are settled and things like that, the number of
14 owners of these private forests and the size of
15 individual tracts that are owned, when the number goes
16 up in people, the size goes down. And so the most
17 common ownership now is in the category between 50 and
18 100 acres. There's a lot of people out there that need to
19 be served with some ideas about forestry and forest
20 management activities.

21 As we've learned over the years, there are a
22 lot of things that need to be done in terms of research
23 and outreach programs that can serve many of these land
24 owners and also serve the states and counties and
25 municipal landowners as well. A major target for

1 research we think has to be the nonfederal forest lands
2 in the country. It doesn't mean that our federal forest
3 lands are not important. It simply means that for a
4 long time we have not paid much attention to these
5 nonfederal forest lands and we need to increase the
6 program that goes into that. In the year 2000, under
7 the leadership of NAPFSC and CSREES, the Coalition for
8 Sustaining America's Nonfederal Forests came together
9 and you got lots of copies of this, since you are the
10 sponsors, but they published this document, which is
11 really a call and an agenda for dealing with our
12 nonfederal forests in terms of research, education and
13 outreach activities. There are over 25 forest and
14 forest landowner groups that have come together to
15 produce this particular document, both in government and
16 out of the government.

17 To reduce the threats to these lands, these
18 nonfederal forests lands from urbanization,
19 fragmentation, forest health problems and increased
20 harvesting pressures, and enhance the opportunities for
21 landowners and communities, we believe that action is
22 needed. Research is needed to significantly enhance
23 sustainability and productivity of nonfederal forests;
24 to increase the financial contribution of these forests
25 to benefit landowners; and to conserve and sustain these

1 forests for future generations. Specifically, we are
2 recommending targeting sustainable and productive forest
3 management; forest inventory, monitoring and assessment;
4 new products, improved processing technologies, and
5 utilization of small trees; and social values and
6 tradeoffs. And that's kind of the research agenda that
7 we're suggesting.

8 But likewise, we need to enhance our outreach
9 activities. We need to develop data bases of landowner
10 information; increase landowner awareness; identify
11 management alternatives; address local issues and needs;
12 and assist in establishing landowner organizations. In
13 addition to increasing focus on nonfederal forest lands
14 and the research and outreach activities that I've
15 identified in those specific targets, in addition to
16 those there's a need to further develop higher education
17 programs within CSREES focused on forestry and national
18 resources. Sometime within the next two months, the
19 National Research Council will release a report on the
20 forest research capacity in the United States. I'm
21 pretty sure that's going to come out. I'm a member of
22 that particular panel of the National Research Council,
23 and I think it's just about ready to be released.
24 That's what I've been told anyway. That report will
25 indicate major needs for building scientific

1 understanding and capacity in both basic natural
2 resource science and in significant emerging areas.

3 Our educational and research capacity and
4 foundation areas such as biology, ecology and
5 silviculture; genetics and biotechnology; forest
6 management, economics and policy; and wood and materials
7 science need a boost if we are to meet the challenges
8 forecast for this century. Emerging areas needing
9 attention are areas such as human natural resource
10 interactions, ecosystem function, health and management,
11 forest systems at various scales of time and space, and
12 forest monitoring, analysis and adaptive management.

13 The report will show that both undergraduate
14 and graduate programs need enhancement that at the
15 graduate level we have very little capacity to produce
16 scientists and outreach specialists in several of these
17 important areas that I've already mentioned and that we
18 continue to need to focus significant attention on
19 developing a more diverse workforce. Higher education
20 programs in CSREES can help solve these problems, but
21 they need to be expanded to do so.

22 Let me just digress from prepared remarks and
23 just mention that within the forestry sector, there are
24 only 14 universities in the country that produce -- not
25 produce, that have enrolled more than 20 forestry Ph.D.

1 students per year. Only 14 in the country. So our
2 capacity is fairly small for developing new scientists
3 to work on the many problems of this 750 million acres,
4 one-third of the nation's land, so we really need some
5 assistance. We need some boost to move on beyond where
6 we are, and many of the fundamental areas of forestry;
7 soils, for example, some wood products areas, some are
8 actually basic biotechnology areas and things like that
9 have very, very few graduate students, masters or
10 doctoral students in the nation. And we need more of
11 those and hopefully your organizations and CSREES
12 programs can help to do that. We don't want the CSREES
13 to solve all the problems, to provide all the money, to
14 provide all the stimulation, but certainly the higher
15 education programs that you administer can help and we
16 need to expand those.

17 So the bottom line, two things that we're
18 calling for is increased research and education outreach
19 activities with regard to nonfederal forest lands; and
20 secondly, some stimulus into the higher education
21 programs of CSREES. We're very committed to working
22 with you in terms of NAPFSC McIntire-Stennis, RREA, NRI,
23 IFAFS and the higher education programs. We've met with
24 Colien often to really help her make her case within
25 the department and on the Hill and we will continue to

1 do so, but we really need your help and attention on
2 these things that I've mentioned. So thanks.

3 MR. SPURLING: Thanks very much. If anyone
4 wants to make a statement now, you're more than welcome
5 to come forward. Just make sure you clearly state your
6 name so we can have it for the record. I leave that up
7 to you. Otherwise we do have another scheduled
8 testimony at about 11 o'clock.

9 MR. RICCHIUTI: Well, good morning. My name is
10 Pat Ricchiuti, and I am representing a number of
11 different groups, and particularly our diversified
12 farming family farm operation. We feel it's so
13 important that we support or get support for education
14 and also advise Sharon of the Agricultural Foundation
15 Board at California State University Fresno, Fresno
16 State and the farm laboratory. I'm second
17 vice-president of the Fresno County Farm Bureau and
18 serve on that board and also on the Clovis Unified
19 School District Agriculture Advisory Board. We're a
20 vertically integrated diversified farming operation
21 dealing particularly in specialty crops, and we are
22 looking to try to promote more universal involvement
23 with the federal government and helping with education
24 in developing those needs that we have in agriculture.
25 Some of those needs are scientists and educators and

1 specialists that are mostly particularly funded by the
2 government to the land grant colleges. One particular
3 interest that we have is we feel that there should be an
4 even playing field and that the nonland grant colleges
5 and universities should also participate and be
6 qualified for those same funds. We feel that it should
7 be held accountable on both sides, whether the land
8 grant or nonland grant colleges, and that that funding
9 be competitive so that we can get the best out of all
10 aspects of those institutions to develop the best
11 agricultural needs for our nation.

12 In California I also am a member of the
13 California State University System Board, on the Ag
14 Research Initiative Board, and in doing so I represent
15 Fresno State as the industry representative. There are
16 three other universities that participate in this ag
17 research initiative which was funded by the State of
18 California through a matching participation fund from
19 the industry and the state university system. The other
20 three universities are Chico State, Cal Poly San Luis
21 Obispo and Cal Poly Pomona. We have been very effective
22 in the use of the funding and have had overwhelming
23 success in the matching of grants that are being
24 provided for that research. We have had to turn away so
25 many very valuable research projects because of the lack

1 of funding. There is a great deal of interest by not
2 only the industry, but by other organizations in the
3 state and particularly to address the specialty crops
4 that are here in the state. We would be looking for
5 help in any way we can in competitive grants and
6 participation with your group so that we could
7 effectively administer more of this research that is so
8 needed in California.

9 One other aspect of some of this research and
10 education that we'd like to see implemented is
11 development of export strategies and competitive ways to
12 compete with imports that are coming into this country.
13 There are a lot of different agriculture products that
14 come in that are subsidized severely or significantly by
15 other foreign interests and countries, and we are
16 finding it very difficult to be able to compete. If
17 we're going to be able to compete, we need to compete on a
18 level playing field in that those same type of
19 regulations and restrictions that are put upon us
20 who are farming here in California should be put on
21 those same products that are imported into the state or
22 into the country. We should have more aggressive
23 support of our national ag policy and with that, we need
24 to develop education that ties with agriculture to give
25 that aid where it's needed, whether it be in funding or

1 those other areas with the extension service in giving
2 people the tools that they need to be more efficient and
3 economically competitive, even on a national level.

4 Another thing that we would like to see is more
5 efficient management of the system in where there is not
6 a lot of competitive research being done. It would be
7 more collaborative research done and partnering of
8 projects, and a lot can be done with geographic areas
9 that are more impacted in certain types of fruits and
10 vegetables or fruit and fibers that are grown in the United
11 States and utilizing the best case scenarios of research
12 in those areas. And that collaboration I think is so
13 important in trying to utilize the economics and
14 efficiencies of those dollars that are spent on that
15 type of research.

16 Again, I'd like to thank you for allowing me to
17 participate and give you our point of view in this, and
18 we would hope that some of these things would be taken
19 back with you and considered seriously about how we
20 could best effect and improve our agriculture, not only
21 in California, but in the United States. Thank you very
22 much.

23 MR. SPURLING: Thanks. That is exactly the
24 kind of things we did want to hear and as you know, we
25 did meet yesterday with Dean Bartell at Fresno State.

1 You've got an excellent program that has state
2 commodity, farmer, and local community involvement and
3 there's a blaring emptiness there that he kept telling
4 us about, and that is there's no federal share in that.
5 And that is something we really want to look at and
6 hopefully through your testimony and in working with
7 others, we can become a part of that partnership. So
8 thanks very much.

9 MR. RICCHIUTI: Thank you, and you can call on
10 me any time.

11 MR. SPURLING: Okay. Again, I don't have -- we
12 have a new --

13 MR. CONTENTE: I had some problems getting
14 here, and I would like to participate.

15 MR. SPURLING: Not a problem. As you can see,
16 we're kind of shorthanded. Are you ready?

17 MR. CONTENTE: I'd like just a few minutes.

18 MR. SPURLING: That's fine. You can take a few
19 minutes.

20 Are you sure you don't want to give us a report
21 on 4-H activities and the California plans for the 100
22 year celebration on 4-H and all that?

23 MS. MACNEIL: Well, I don't know that I have
24 all the information in terms of recommendation.

25 MR. SPURLING: You don't have to. Phil Schwab

1 who's in the back here, the reason why he's not
2 participating more in this is the House of
3 Representatives is considering the farm bill today, and
4 we've got running communications between the department
5 and Phil giving advice on amendments that affect us and
6 what our comments are to those amendments. So he's back
7 there actually making comments on the farm bill as they
8 take it up on the floor. But we've been working with
9 Alma Hobbs who heads our 4-H partnership for the agency
10 on the celebration and the 100 years that are going to
11 be coming up next year. Hopefully -- I think the
12 president has agreed to sign a proclamation in the Rose
13 Garden to kind of kick it off early next year, and Phil
14 I know has worked on possibly some kind of reception on
15 Capitol Hill. So if you want to give us a brief rundown
16 in California with regard to that, that would be great.

17 MS. MACNEIL: Let me have a few moments to
18 think about it.

19 MR. SPURLING: Gary, did you want to give a
20 long speech?

21 MR. CUNNINGHAM: I have never given a long
22 speech. And that's a lie.

23 MR. SPURLING: That's why we like you so much.

24 (Whereupon the proceedings were paused
25 and a short break taken.)

1 MR. SPURLING: Okay. We've someone else ready
2 to testify. Joaquin Contente from the California
3 Farmers Union.

4 MR. CONTENTE: Right. Good morning. I
5 appreciate the opportunity to come here. I wish we had
6 more participants here today, but we'll take what we can
7 get. I'm not going to read my testimony. I gave it out
8 to everyone in the room here. We'll try to make this thing
9 a little bit more interesting than reading this, and
10 what I'll do is I'll highlight on those three points
11 that I have down there in that second paragraph.

12 I'm a dairyman from Hanford, California. I'm
13 second generation, my brother and I, and I've got my
14 kids involved in the farm and everything. We're
15 basically a family operation, although for California
16 the farms seem to grow a little bit larger than they do
17 in the rest of the United States in the dairy business,
18 and I think that's part of the problem that we're seeing
19 in agriculture today is the consolidation that's going
20 on. But anyway, let's go on and talk about these
21 points.

22 The highest priority needs of the United States
23 food and fiber system. I believe that food for this
24 country is as important or more important than oil, and
25 we should give agriculture our fullest attention. As I

1 stated earlier, I'm not going to be following the
2 written testimony. I'm going to go ahead and just have
3 this a little bit more interesting, hopefully.
4 Agriculture seems to be always left behind in a lot of
5 our policies in America lately. The last few years,
6 probably the last 25, 20 years, agriculture has asked to
7 be held accountable. A lot of programs have been cut.
8 A lot of departments have seen changes, and we're going
9 through this change, and I think it's going to affect us
10 eventually if we don't change the path we're on. And we
11 need to have some realizations, talk about the things
12 that are happening in agriculture.

13 First, I think what one needs to do is identify
14 the problems that are facing agriculture. The main
15 problem facing most farmers in California and it doesn't
16 matter what they grow, a nut crop, a vegetable crop,
17 cattle or whatever is the price. We're not receiving
18 the price for the commodities and the different crops
19 that we're growing. And if we're not receiving a price,
20 you're not going to be able to survive very long. In my
21 industry, for example, we used to have probably four or
22 five times more producers in the state at one time, not
23 that long ago. We used to produce 10 million pounds of
24 milk 25 years ago. We have grown 300 percent in the
25 production of milk in this state. Basically, I would

1 attribute that to the mechanisms that we put in place,
2 the license system. The producers have constantly
3 consolidated and gotten larger and larger, and we're to
4 the point now we're causing some environmental
5 situations where we've got E-coli on top of
6 us and we've got some problems there.

7 Let's talk about capitalism. In order to have
8 capitalism, we got to have a balance of buyers and
9 sellers. We don't have to today in agriculture. If you
10 look at the number of farmers that are in the United
11 States which is roughly around a million farmers,
12 depending upon the definition of a farmer, basically
13 those million people are selling to probably no more
14 than 20 conglomerates by the time you get it down. ATM
15 either owns that company, Phillip Morris, Cargill.
16 There is not competition. You don't have that balance.
17 And if you don't have that balance, the buyers and
18 sellers, you don't have capitalism. We're fooling
19 ourselves. It's going to be very, very important for
20 the government to be involved in being that middle
21 person to negotiate that balance between the buyers and
22 sellers. Otherwise we're going to lose capitalism.
23 We're going to be a country of corporations. In fact,
24 we're pretty close to that already.

25 The economic development and revitalization

1 needs of rural America. I don't know that much about
2 this agency. I was briefed yesterday on a few of the
3 things that you work on. Whatever we can do to try to
4 get the rural communities back on their feet as we're
5 going through this crisis, we need to try to help those
6 communities. There's a tremendous devastation
7 throughout a lot of not only the rest of the United
8 States but California and in Fresno right here in this
9 particular county. Last year the grape farmers, they
10 put their crop in in September. That's when they
11 harvested it. Most of those people didn't receive any
12 payment until later on in the spring, late spring, May
13 and June. There was no reason that that should have
14 happened.

15 But then that leads to the next part about
16 globalization, which is the third point we put on here,
17 the modern challenges to the United States food and
18 fiber production created by the globalization of our
19 food system. What's happening today is that the farmers
20 share the retail dollars being diminished by the
21 stranglehold that the corporations have on those
22 markets. In other words, the dominance of those
23 corporations -- let me give you an example in my case.
24 I'm a dairyman. We have about 80,000 dairy producers in
25 the United States today. We're basically selling to

1 three entities. And by the way, those three entities do
2 not compete against each other. One is in the retail
3 market and that would be Kraft, and the other one is in
4 the food service market which they produce half of the
5 mozzarella production in the United States and that
6 would be Leprino. And now with the other merger, you're
7 going to see 35, 30 percent of the food market in the
8 hands of one conglomerate. Even though you have 80,000
9 dairy producers and you have multiple co-ops in the
10 United States, the end buyer is basically one of these
11 three people. No competition. No capitalism. This
12 needs to change.

13 What we need to do is we need to develop a
14 balance between the marketplace and societal needs. For
15 example, under WTO regs today, we've opened up a lot of
16 market access into this country. By the way, it's the
17 best market in the world from other countries. As we've
18 opened up those markets into this country, we forgot
19 about food safety. DDT is still manufactured today in
20 the United States. Can't be used here. It's illegal.
21 We don't use it. It's used someplace in the world.
22 Thirty percent of our vegetables coming into the United
23 States are imported. If you start to see the picture
24 here coming together, we're kind of a hypocritical
25 society right now. We outlaw the product, but we still

1 manufacture it. We still sell it and we import products
2 with no inspection.

3 Let's go back to my personal case here, milk
4 business. I produce milk. We've had for the last five
5 years a 600 percent increase on milk protein concentrate
6 coming into the United States. Well, how does that
7 work? How does that play? Well, I'm in the WTO
8 negotiations back in '93, '94. Milk protein got
9 classified as a chemical because we didn't produce it in
10 the United States. We still don't produce it. So it
11 got thrown in the categories of a chemical which it's
12 used for paints and it's used for glues and therefore
13 there is no tariff on it. Well, there's a real minute
14 little tariff. It's about \$3 a ton or something like
15 that. Now, what happened in 1995 is this country
16 basically became a negative producer of milk. We don't
17 produce enough milk for the consumption needs, so then
18 there's a mad scramble around that period, '95, '96 to
19 try to compensate for that lack of production we have
20 here. And the industry, and when I say the industry,
21 the people that make the cheese and these other
22 products, they figured out a way to move a lot of this
23 product in and to do it without paying those tariffs.
24 Now, the EU subsidizes their MPC, they subsidize it to
25 the tune of over \$1 per pound. So then we have to

1 compete against the subsidy without a tariff. The
2 countries down under, they're basically a climatic
3 producer. In other words, because they have 60 inches
4 of rainfall, their pasture base, they don't have the
5 inputs that we have here in America. We don't have any
6 climates here in the United States where it doesn't
7 freeze and there's 60 inches of average rainfall. It
8 gets close to it, and they may get 120 inches, but
9 they're not year round pasturing. In New Zealand, it's
10 pasture year round. Hardly no input costs. But anyway,
11 we're competing against those things with hardly no
12 tariffs because of this loophole, this classification
13 that happened. And there's not any way in the United
14 States that we can compete against these people. In the
15 United States we have workmen's compensation. We have
16 Social Security. We have minimum wage. We have OSHA
17 regulations. We have environmental regulations. When
18 you go to Brazil, you don't have those things.
19 Argentina, China, you don't have those things. So on
20 this globalized economy that we've developed, we forgot
21 about the societal needs, and we need to try to bring
22 those problems to the surface.

23 Most people don't think too much about these
24 things. They just say we have a problem, we'll work
25 through that. I was in Washington the other day. We

1 visited with the USDA people. The secretary gave us a
2 little speech and we spent all day with the USDA people
3 and some people in the administration. Every meeting
4 that we had we were fed about how important it is to do
5 exports, how trade is so important to the United States
6 agriculture. When in reality, it's the trade that's
7 hurting us. It's the unfair trade, this lack of balance
8 between the marketplace and the societal needs. There
9 needs to be a balance there.

10 First of all, you have to recognize the
11 problems, what that balance, what those imbalances are.
12 And I'm a little bit off page here, but I think in order
13 for us to ask another agency of the government to come
14 in for solutions, I think we need to identify the
15 problems, and that's what I was trying to help do here
16 today is identify the problems. The basic core
17 fundamental problems and one of those problems of how we
18 got to the point where we're at is the corporate
19 dominance of our government. And I think everyone
20 that's in government probably realizes there's a lot of
21 influence by corporations at the political level, which
22 of course you have no input or solutions to that, but
23 that influence is hurting America and we need to get
24 beyond that. We need to first recognize that we need to
25 talk about it, debate it and before we can have some

1 real solutions, I think that needs to be discussed.

2 Anyway, I'd like to just wrap that up. If there's any
3 questions or anything I can do --

4 MR. SPURLING: Thanks very much. Do you have
5 anything?

6 MR. SCOTT: Yeah, I think I can say a few
7 things.

8 MR. SPURLING: Okay. That would be great.

9 Next we're going to have Will Scott, Jr. who's
10 representing the African American Farmers in California.

11 MR. SCOTT: Okay. Thank you. Just to give you
12 a little bit of history of our organization. In 1997 we
13 came together as a group because we had a lawsuit that
14 was filed by an African American bank in the south, so
15 we got together as a group because we was affected by
16 that, by some of the things that happened to us here.
17 Before 1998 we had no organization. By doing this we
18 also came in contact with a lot of government agencies
19 that were willing to come forward and expose us to a lot
20 of services that we've, you know -- a lot of us don't
21 have party to, that we was unaware that was there. Some
22 of the things that we encountered, too, was there's a
23 lot of information that we really needed in order for us
24 to function as a farmer. Some of the information that
25 we had was by trial and error, and we'd find out that

1 the practice has already been established by the
2 government and the farmers that we didn't know about.
3 So we got involved in that and we've been able to really
4 do things in a lot different manner, but I think along
5 with that, too, is we're also affected by the things
6 that usually affect small farmers in general. You know,
7 the competition and stuff like that coming in from the
8 other countries.

9 It's -- I guess to give you some statistics, in
10 California there's approximately 277 African American
11 farmers that we know of. You're looking at probably
12 less than one percent of the total farmers in
13 California, so there's not that many of us. If you were
14 to ask anybody in the black farmers league, they know
15 because they haven't seen any. If they are there,
16 they're hidden out there and what has happened is the
17 farmer has taken it upon himself to try to survive on
18 his own, do his own methods and stay away from the
19 government. But in order for us to survive, in order to
20 survive I guess for the small farmer in general is that
21 we have to work in partnership with the government,
22 because the information that we need is already there.
23 Somebody's already did the research or somebody is in
24 the process of doing the research that we should be
25 involved in. So we're now optimistic about being

1 involved in it, and we like to attend these meetings and
2 tell you some of the needs that we need.

3 And I think looking at it in I guess a broader
4 scope is that what I've been able to I guess perceive is
5 that the policies that have been made in agriculture
6 usually come from the mid west. In California we're
7 kind of different. We're diverse. We can probably
8 grow -- well, we do grow crops 365 days out of the year.
9 So we have somewhat maybe not a unique need, but we have
10 different needs, and I think some of the policies should
11 be extended down to us so that we're able to do things
12 more efficient and also be able to survive. I'm kind of
13 impressed with some of the stuff that the extension
14 service in Fresno is doing, getting exposed to some
15 things that we need as far as crop. Like I said, some
16 of the methods we use that you go by are pretty good.
17 But there's also research that's been made to us, you
18 know, like when do you plant. What we found out, too,
19 is planting seeds and stuff like that is also predicated
20 upon the temperature. Most of us were unaware of
21 that. We said it's a nice day, go plant and you may or
22 may not get germination. Some other things we found out
23 as far as resources, how do you get funds to survive.
24 And what I'd like to say, too, is organizations like
25 yourselves, that you're there and we know about you now

1 and I would think that I would encourage us take it on
2 down to another level and see what you're doing now and
3 see what we're needing. And sometimes when we tell you
4 what our problem is, you might be able to tell us
5 exactly what we need to and how to accomplish this.
6 Like I say, to give you another little story, too, is
7 that as an African American, we have a situation with
8 farming anyway, is that we kind of equate it back to
9 slavery. So when I was coming up, my parents told me is
10 you get away from farming. It's hard labor. There's no
11 pay. There's nothing to it. So that's what we did. We
12 got educated and got into other areas. But food is
13 important and I think food is probably going to be one
14 of the other things that's going to affect this country,
15 and I think unless we got a hold of it, it's not only
16 making the small farmers, I think they're very vital,
17 and that if they disappear, so would our way of life as
18 a whole. Because like he said before, if the
19 corporations take over, what kind of food are we going
20 to be consuming anyway. Would it be something
21 beneficial to us or something to survive. I think that
22 we need to make sure that the small farmer has a chance
23 to survive, and I think the organization, whether it be
24 government or whatever, makes sure that the playing
25 field is level. Because if they can pay a guy a dollar

1 in another country to grow something and we have to pay
2 minimum wage which is almost \$7 and abide by all the
3 other regulations that requires money out of our pockets
4 in order for us to meet the restrictions that the
5 government is setting, we can't survive. We won't
6 survive. Another thing, too, is like conservation of
7 the land we have. We got the information of what we
8 need to do in order to preserve what we have. If we
9 don't do that, then like I say, what are we going to do?
10 We'll be eating stuff out of a tube or a pill or
11 something. But that's all I have and I appreciate you
12 letting me say a few words and to continue your good
13 work and, you know, sooner or later we'll come on line,
14 too, as we get the information that we need.

15 MR. SPURLING: Okay. We have one more speaker
16 that's supposed to be here around 11:00 o'clock. So
17 we'll wait until then.

18 MR. BROWN: Jim, in light of the small numbers,
19 what are you going to do today?

20 MR. SPURLING: We're just going to do the
21 testimony I think. I don't see where we can do the
22 round table.

23 MR. BROWN: Okay. That's what I want to know.

24 (Whereupon the proceedings were paused
25 and a short break taken.)

1 MR. SPURLING: Okay. I just got a note from
2 our 11:00 o'clock and he's not going to be able to make
3 it. So we're going to close out today's testimony with
4 Carol MacNeil.

5 MS. MACNEIL: Well, I figured we can't leave
6 without having at least a little bit of youth
7 development perspective here. I wasn't intending to
8 speak, but I thought I would share with you just a
9 little bit about what's going on in California and also
10 a little bit about the national conversation on youth
11 development that was alluded to earlier. In terms of
12 California, youth development in California and
13 specifically the 4-H youth development program, you
14 know, California as a state is facing some pretty major
15 issues and challenges economically, demographically in
16 terms of energy, in terms of water, land use issues and
17 a number of issues, and you could say opportunities as
18 well. I also think in the field of youth development,
19 the recent events, September 11th in particular, have
20 heightened the question of what are we doing with youth
21 as an organization, and what are we trying to accomplish
22 with youth. And I think it has really crystallized the
23 need at least from my perspective for youth development
24 and for us to look at certain questions, like how is it
25 that we prepare young people to be engaged and effective

1 citizens. How do we help them develop the skills that
2 they need to be able to respond effectively and
3 appropriately to a major crisis like what we're facing
4 right now as a country. Beyond that, I think as a field
5 of youth development, we need to be looking at how is it
6 that we help young people understand and address the
7 issues that underlie such crisis. Because it's not just
8 about responding. It's about preventing. It's about
9 the ability to envision the future and foresee problems,
10 and what are we doing as an organization that helps our
11 young people develop those skills. And then finally the
12 other question that I think has come up for us in the
13 field recently has been how do we help young people
14 build bridges of understanding and respect and
15 compassion across those differences of religion and
16 nationality and whatever other categories we use to
17 group people. I think in California these are very,
18 very pressing issues as they are in other places, but I
19 think we're feeling them in certain ways more than other
20 places in the United States may be feeling them. And
21 they are questions that we must address. We have no
22 option. And again, and I would frame it in terms of
23 both challenges and opportunities because we have to
24 help our young people see the diversity of our state and
25 our counties as an amazing resource richness and not

1 just as a problem to be overcome.

2 So given those state-wide demographic and
3 economic changes and the national issues that we're
4 dealing with, we're at a particularly interesting time
5 in the 4-H youth development program, I think, and the
6 national conversation process feeds into that very
7 fortuitously. The national conversation, just to give a
8 little bit of background is a process, county by county,
9 state by state of identifying the directions that youth
10 development, the field of youth development should go.
11 It's an amazing opportunity for us as an organization to
12 join with other organizations, to partner, to dialogue
13 with parents, with government officials, with social
14 service agencies, with teachers and schools and
15 districts to look together about where we should be
16 heading as a field. The process will start at the
17 county level with those conversations in each state, in
18 each county in each state, leading up to a state
19 conversation in each state, which will lead to a
20 national conversation to be held in Washington, D.C. at
21 the end of February, culminating in a report to the
22 president with recommendations for the field of youth
23 development and where the government can best assist the
24 field in pushing us forward to be most effective with
25 our young people and our families. So the question to

1 me seems so appropriate right now and not just
2 appropriate but pressing, right now, and I think we're
3 in need of some dialogue around this issue. It's really
4 a great time to be doing this.

5 I think also one of the interesting parts of
6 this process is the power of youth pledge campaign, and
7 the power of youth pledge campaign is part of the
8 conversation process where young people, families,
9 participants, whether they're in 4-H or not, can make a
10 pledge to commit a certain number of hours toward a
11 community service to making the community stronger and
12 better. And in California, one of the things that we've
13 done is to encourage our counties to use the pledge
14 campaign as a response to September 11th in one of
15 several ways; either as an educational tool to help
16 people that are dealing emotionally with the tragedy, or
17 as an ongoing relief tool so that they can raise money,
18 do care packages, whatever the county youth come up
19 with, or as a way to address hate crimes, to address
20 diversity, to build bridges of understanding. So those
21 are some of the ways that we've suggested the counties
22 use the power of youth pledge campaign to directly
23 respond and to positively respond to this tragedy, to do
24 something positive for them.

25 In California the national conversation process

1 is also perfectly timed for us because we are engaged in
2 a strategic planning process here. And what the
3 question that's guiding us right now as an organization
4 in California is how do we make a unique measurable and
5 significant difference in the lives of youth and
6 families and in the field of youth development. Each of
7 those words I could talk for an hour on because they're
8 each very important but, you know, I think that part of
9 what we're looking at is how do we take the tradition of
10 4-H youth development and our very strong links to
11 agriculture and ag education and bridge that with the
12 future needs as they are being identified through this
13 conversation process. How do we keep what's best about
14 our history, a hundred years, which includes not only
15 the ag education but also a really strong history in
16 citizenship and leadership development as well, how do
17 we keep hold of that and not lose sight of that and at
18 the same time move it forward to address issues that we
19 couldn't have imagined 100 years ago. Those are big
20 questions and it's going to be a nice probably six month
21 process for us, as I said, linked to the national
22 conversation process. We have also a small group of
23 academics who are coordinating that process and will be
24 developing a new mission statement and specific goals
25 and objectives for the next five to ten years in

1 California.

2 And as we're looking, kind of backing up and
3 looking at 4-H in California, there's some things that
4 have come up for us that I think may have some
5 pertinence to the relationship between us and USDA,
6 CSREES. In California, we deal with this balance, this
7 very delicate balance between being a state-wide
8 organization and having some state-wide organization and
9 leadership, and on the other side of being a collection
10 of counties who identify local needs and respond
11 effectively to local needs. So there's always this
12 delicate balance I think between local autonomy and
13 state-wide vision, and I think there's the same kind of
14 balance that has to happen between the state
15 organization and the federal organization. And from our
16 perspective -- from my perspective, I'm not going to
17 pretend to speak for all of the 4-H leaders, but from my
18 perspective, I think that it kind of boils down to the
19 coordination and communication functions that USDA,
20 CSREES can play for us, particularly in terms of human
21 and financial resources. So I think that we look to our
22 federal partner for help in terms of identifying
23 resources, financial resources, certainly, but also in
24 terms of identifying human resources and the ways that
25 we can use our human resources more effectively. What

1 we don't want to be doing in California is duplicating
2 effort. We want to be complimenting, not reinventing
3 what other organizations are doing. And I think that
4 there's some amazing resources at the federal level that
5 can help us. In fact, we've been having a conversation
6 about that throughout today, so this has been beneficial
7 for that reason for me. But I think there's a lot of --
8 we struggle with it in California where we see
9 duplicated effort from county to county, and I think the
10 same thing is happening on a national level within our
11 organization where we need to respond to pressing issues
12 and we may not realize that another state has had that
13 same pressing issue and has developed responses or has
14 developed materials or has found sources of support.
15 And we need to find ways of increasing the communication
16 and coordination so that we can be learning from each
17 other from state to state. I think the same is true in
18 terms of our need to be measuring what we do and
19 collecting impact evaluation data. There are tools that
20 exist, and one of the roles that our federal partners
21 can play for us is to help us know what's happening in
22 other parts of the U.S. in order to not have to reinvent
23 that wheel each time we want to evaluate a program. So
24 those are just a few of my thoughts about our
25 partnership, our federal partner and a little bit of

1 background about what's going on in California. Thank
2 you.

3 MR. SPURLING: Thank you very much. I have no
4 one else scheduled, so I'm going to officially call the
5 hearing at an end, and we do thank everyone who did come
6 very much. Thank you.

7 (Whereupon Exhibits 1 through 4 were
8 marked for identification.)

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10 (Whereupon the foregoing proceedings were
11 adjourned at the hour of 10:55 a.m.)

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1 State of California)
2 County of Fresno) ss.
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4 I, CHERYL L. COON, a Certified Shorthand
5 Reporter of the State of California, do hereby certify
6 that the foregoing pages numbered 1 through 39,
7 inclusive, comprise a full, true and correct transcript
8 of the proceedings taken in the within-entitled matter
9 at:

10 Picadilly Inn - University
11 4961 N. Cedar Avenue
12 Fresno, California
13 on October 3, 2001.

14 In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my
15 hand and affixed my signature at my office in Fresno,
16 California, this October 10, 2001.

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CHERYL L. COON, C.S.R. 10039

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